

Serial Number: 10/065,870
Filed: 11/26/2002

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Remarks

The Examiner rejected claims 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 112 as indefinite and failing to support the written description requirement. To place the application in better form for appeal, should appeal be necessary, Claim 21 has been canceled.

The Examiner rejected claims 17-21 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by *Budreck*. The Examiner has identified the body assemblies 12, 14 of the cited reference as first and second clips. Applicant respectfully re-submits that these are not clips as understood by one skilled in the art upon a review of the specification. In fact, the cited device does not include clips at all. The Examiner identifies the eyelets 42, 96 as "retaining tabs". Applicant previously amended the claims to clarify that the clips are in fact clips according to the ordinary meaning of the term, i.e. attachable to the cord by the clips in a direction tangential to the longitudinal axis of the cord. In the interest of prosecution economy and according to the Examiner's suggestion, Applicant herein amends the reference axis to be the longitudinal axis of the first and second clips, respectively. Movement of the first and second clips, in a direction tangential to a longitudinal axis of the first and second clips, respectively, cannot result in a threading of an eyelet, because each eyelet is a continuous ring which encircles the longitudinal axis of the "clip". Movement tangential to the longitudinal axis of the clip will therefore impact the eyelet rather than thread it.

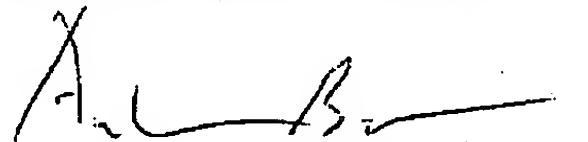
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Therefore, it is not possible for the eyelets of *Budrek* to be characterized as the claimed first and second clip(s). Because each and every element of the claimed invention fails to appear in the cited reference, rejection of claims 17-21 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by *Budreck* is improper.

Having obviated each of the Examiner's rejections, Applicant respectfully requests that a Notice of Allowance be issued. Should the Examiner be inclined to issue an Official Action other than the Notice of Allowance, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner first contact Applicant by telephone at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

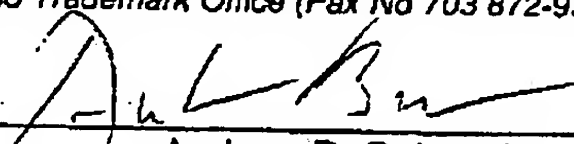


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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (Fax No 703 872-9306) on May 25, 2004.



Andrew D. Babcock